

Whereas Abraham Lincoln left Illinois 4 months after being elected President of the United States in 1860;

Whereas Abraham Lincoln was the first member of the Republican party elected President of the United States and helped build the Republican party into a strong national organization;

Whereas, after his election and the secession of the southern States, Abraham Lincoln steered the United States through the most profound moral and political crisis, and the bloodiest war, in the history of the Nation;

Whereas, by helping to preserve the Union and by holding a national election, as scheduled, during a civil war, Abraham Lincoln reaffirmed the commitment of the people of the United States to majority rule and democracy;

Whereas the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln declared that slaves within the Confederacy would be forever free and welcomed more than 200,000 African American soldiers and sailors into the armed forces of the Union;

Whereas the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln fundamentally transformed the Civil War from a battle for political unity to a moral fight for freedom;

Whereas the faith Abraham Lincoln had in democracy was strong, even after the bloodiest battle of the war at Gettysburg;

Whereas the inspiring words spoken by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg still resonate today: "that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth";

Whereas Abraham Lincoln was powerfully committed to unity, turning rivals into allies within his own Cabinet and welcoming the defeated Confederacy back into the Union with characteristic generosity, "with malice toward none; with charity for all";

Whereas Abraham Lincoln became the first President of the United States to be assassinated, days after giving a speech promoting voting rights for African Americans;

Whereas, through his opposition to slavery, Abraham Lincoln set the United States on a path toward resolving the tension between the ideals of "liberty and justice for all" espoused by the Founders of the United States and the ignoble practice of slavery, and redefined what it meant to be a citizen of the United States;

Whereas, in his commitment to unity, Abraham Lincoln did more than simply abolish slavery; he ensured that the promise that "all men are created equal" was an inheritance to be shared by all people of the United States;

Whereas the story of Abraham Lincoln and the example of his life, including his inspiring rise from humble origins to the highest office of the land and his decisive leadership through the most harrowing time in the history of the United States, continues to bring hope and inspiration to millions in the United States and around the world, making him one of the greatest Presidents and humanitarians in history; and

Whereas February 12, 2009, marks the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the bicentennial of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln;

(2) recognizes and echoes the commitment of Abraham Lincoln to what he called the "unfinished work" of unity and harmony in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to recommit to fulfilling the vision of Abraham Lincoln of equal rights for all.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to make a statement relative to this anniversary of Lincoln's birth, but I would be prepared first to yield to the Republican leader if he wishes to make a statement.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank my friend from Illinois. I do have a couple of brief observations.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we have not seen all the details of the deal between House and Senate Democrats, but some of the early reports suggest this bill has only gotten worse. The President has asked for 40 percent in tax cuts; this bill falls short of that. But Congressional Democrats did make sure it contains billions in questionable, nonstimulative projects and the most highly touted tax cut in the original proposal now translates to \$7.70 a week for middle-class workers.

This bill was meant to be a stimulus that was timely, targeted, and temporary. Unfortunately, it appears to be none of the above. Democrats in Congress have said this plan will help ensure long-term economic growth. Yet the CBO suggests that over the long term, this bill will result in an economy that either declines or remains flat. The only thing we know for sure about this bill is it will lead to more debt for our children—and that is just the beginning. This week, Congressional Democrats are handing the taxpayers a bill for \$1.2 trillion. Soon they will spend \$400 billion to finish spending from last year. We are being told to get ready for untold hundreds of billions for the financial industry.

Since taking over Congress and the White House, Democrats have been making up for lost time with a Government spending spree on the taxpayers' credit card. Even without this massive spending bill, the deficit continues to grow. Yesterday, Treasury reported that the first 4 months of the fiscal year, the deficit rose to \$569 billion. That is nearly \$500 billion more than the same period last year.

Let me repeat that. According to Treasury, we ran a deficit in the first quarter of this fiscal year that is nearly \$500 billion more than the same period last year. You do not have to be Suze Orman to know this is not sustainable.

I know everyone involved believes their efforts will help strengthen the economy and create jobs. No one should doubt that everyone is trying to do the right thing. My concern is not with the motivation behind these efforts but the wisdom of these efforts. Everyone wants to help Americans get back on their feet, but we need to do it

smartly. In my view and in the view of my Republican colleagues, this is not a smart approach. The taxpayers of today and tomorrow will be left to clean up the mess.

LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later today Members of Congress will join President Obama and the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to honor the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth. My good friend Senator BUNNING has my gratitude for his work on the Commission.

The people of my State are rightly proud of the fact that Abraham Lincoln was born 3 miles south of Hodgenville, KY. And there are events across our State and others honoring this great man. And the ceremony later today will be an opportunity for us all to remember his life and service.

NAACP CENTENNIAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the NAACP on this, its 100th anniversary.

One hundred years ago, 60 men and women answered a call to promote social equality in this country. This effort brought together a diverse group of prominent Americans, including Kentucky native William English Walling, who signed a manifesto forming the NAACP. They chose February 12 as their founding date to honor the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

Since then, the NAACP has recognized the contributions of Americans who have made strides in eliminating prejudice.

This year, the NAACP will honor Kentucky native Muhammad Ali for a lifetime of contributions. When I was growing up in Louisville, I went to Dupont Manual High School. A young man who was then named Cassius Clay was in the same grade at Central High School. He was the most well known teenager in town by far. We all knew him as the local Golden Gloves champ.

His spirit of hard work and efforts to improve his community are being rightly honored by the NAACP this year, and Kentucky is proud that one of its own is being honored this week.

So to all at the NAACP, congratulations on this centennial. It is an opportunity to reflect on the efforts and accomplishments of those who worked so hard over the past century to advance your founding goals.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I make some remarks about the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, I wish to respond to the Republican leader's comments about the ongoing negotiations that have been inspired by

President Obama's request that we pass a stimulus package, a spending bill and tax cut package that will reinvigorate this economy and try to stop the loss of jobs in America.

It is troubling to hear the frequent criticism from the Republican side that this is going to add to our deficit. No one doubts that. We are talking about the need to spend money immediately to stop the downward spiral of our economy. It will surely add to the deficit. But doing nothing, taking the approach that has been espoused by many on the other side of the aisle, will lead to even greater deficits and more suffering.

What we are trying to do is to step in with this tourniquet and try to stop the bleeding in this economy so we can turn it around for the families and businesses that are suffering today.

It troubles me, as I hear the Republican leader come and tell us of their concerns about deficits. I think, frankly, the air in the Senate Chamber leads to political amnesia, because many of the critics of our current efforts have forgotten that when President Bush came to office 8 years ago, he inherited a surplus from the Clinton administration—a surplus. We were giving longevity to the Social Security Program because we had a surplus in the Treasury. What happened to that surplus? I will tell you what happened. President Bush, George W. Bush, inherited the debt of the United States, the accumulated debt of every President from George Washington to George W. Bush, which was \$5 trillion.

At the end of his 8 years we had more than doubled the national debt of America. His decisions to double that debt by a war he did not pay for and tax cuts for wealthy people at a time when we should not have had tax cuts were endorsed by that side of the aisle. They stood in approval of President Bush's policies that doubled the national debt from \$5 trillion to \$10 trillion.

President Obama, 3 weeks ago, inherited the worst economic crisis since Franklin Roosevelt came to office in 1933 with the Great Depression. He is doing everything in his power to turn this around and he knows we need to spend money into this economy to create and save 3 to 4 million jobs. The criticism from the other side of the aisle is it is going to add to the national debt. Where have these tears been for the last 8 years when their President doubled the national debt?

I am also troubled by the fact that when this package came before the Congress, many Republican Senators who refused to vote for it added costs to the package. A Senator from Iowa in the Finance Committee added an amendment that cost \$70 billion to the package and then said he couldn't vote for the package because it costs too much. A Senator from Georgia added anywhere from \$11 to \$30 billion, depending on the best estimate, to the cost of the package and then said he

couldn't vote for the package because it costs too much.

I have to tell you, I do not believe that the message from the other side of the aisle is consistent.

Three Republican Senators have had the courage to step up and say we will work with you, we will come together and try to solve this problem. I salute them—Senators SNOWE and COLLINS of Maine and Senator SPECTER of Pennsylvania. But, they said, if you are going to do that we want to reduce the cost of the package.

I did not happen to agree with that approach, but I am prepared to compromise. I am prepared to work with them. It took \$100 billion out of this package, this recovery and reinvestment package. Frankly, I do not, as I said, agree with that—at a time we had to basically come together if we were going to have any agreement.

Now the Senate Republican leader comes to the floor and criticizes the cuts in the package. Why did the amount of tax cuts for families go from \$500 to \$400? It was because the Republican Senators said we want to bring down the cost and that was one of the ways we did it. I can't follow the logic, if there is any, on the other side of the aisle—criticizing adding to the deficit after they doubled it over the last 8 years, then criticizing cuts in the package, reducing its spending when in fact they say it costs too much, and offering amendments on that side of the aisle to add cost to the package and then arguing that it is too expensive. It is completely inconsistent. Their arguments are completely inconsistent and I think the American people know it.

They want Congress to come together and find solutions. They want partnership, not partisanship. They want us to stop squabbling and start working together. That is what we are trying to do, even today. It is hard. It is difficult. We are trying to find the votes to make this happen. It is essential that we do.

READING THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS ON THE BICENTENNIAL OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today marks the bicentennial of the birth of America's greatest President, Abraham Lincoln. This morning, as part of the nationwide celebration of this historic anniversary, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in my hometown of Springfield, IL, is sponsoring a simultaneous reading of the Gettysburg Address by schoolchildren from coast to coast. I remember as a schoolchild memorizing the Gettysburg Address. I am happy to see that a new generation of American children is studying what many consider to be the greatest speech in our Nation's history.

But we can all learn from Lincoln. We are never too old. So this morning we in the Senate will also listen to the speech that many consider the greatest

summation in our Nation's history of the meaning and price of freedom.

After that, some of us will take the floor and share our thoughts on President Lincoln's immortal words and his powerful and enduring legacy.

These are the words President Abraham Lincoln spoke on the blood-drenched battlefield in Gettysburg, PA, on November 19, 1863:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

The Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania was the largest battle ever fought on American soil. In the third summer of the Civil War, the Army of the Potomac met the Army of Northern Virginia at a crossroads near the small market town of Gettysburg, PA. For 3 brutal days, from July 1 to July 3, more than 160,000 American soldiers clashed in what would prove to be a decisive Union victory and a turning point in the war.

When the cannons and guns fell silent on July 4, our Nation's birthday, more than 51,000 Confederate and Union soldiers were wounded, missing, or dead. And 4½ months later, when President Lincoln traveled to Gettysburg to help dedicate America's first national cemetery, the battlefield was still covered with scars and signs of the carnage.

One soldier recalled, “. . . all about were traces of the fierce conflict. Rifle pits, cut and scarred trees, broken fences, pieces of artillery wagons and harness, scraps of blue and gray clothing, bent canteens. . . .”

President Lincoln was not supposed to be the main speaker at this dedication. In fact, there was a 2-hour speech given by Edward Everett, who was considered one of the great orators of his day. Abraham Lincoln's remarks took 2 minutes. They were so brief that when he finished, many in the crowd of